CREA
COMMUNITY OF RESEARCH ON EXCELLENCE FOR ALL

OPEN DOORS SCHOOLS

The problem your project solves

One of the big challenges we face during the COVID-19 is to sustain physical distance as a preventive measure to overcome the pandemic. During confinement children and young people are experiencing social distancing from school, meaning different approach to academic content and learning but also much less social engagement with teachers and peers. During this time of on line interaction and confinement there has been an increase on children abuse and there is an increased risk of unnoticed other cases. Families are concern about how to maintain expected levels of academic learning while maintaining and promoting children's wellbeing.

The solution you bring to the table

The project will propose a set of 'Open doors actions' (ODAs). These are an evidence-based set of strategies for schools, families and educational communities to address the lack of meaningful social contacts with peers during the confinement by promoting caring, safe and friendly environments that prevent violence and abuse and help children to acquire quality learning. Those actions will be available in a virtual space that will provide training, exchange of experiences and peer learning opportunities in a simple, cost effective and sustainable format.

What you have done during the weekend

• Compile existing evidence-based actions that ensure quality education and prevent violence and abuse against children that can transferred to a virtual space during the confinement.

• Review and compile cases of schools that are already implementing some of these actions with high social impact.

• Design a prototype of virtual space where these actions can be transferred and scaled up quickly to other schools, families and communities in Europe.

• Create a business plan and dissemination strategy to reach as many schools, families and communities in Europe as possible.

The solution's impact to the crisis

The project will propose a set of 'Open doors actions' (ODAs). These are an evidence-based set of strategies for schools, families and educational communities to address the lack of meaningful social contacts with peers during the confinement by promoting caring, safe and friendly environments that prevent violence and abuse and help to acquire quality learning.

"Open doors" project starts from the identification of educational actions that have already improved learning and created friendly and safe environments in schools, as well as actions that specifically prevent children abuse, in order to facilitate schools, families and communities continue implementing those actions virtually during confinement, and bring them to new schools, families and communities across Europe to help them face the challenge of learning in confinement.

"Open doors" is a virtual espace with a set of actions (ODAs) and resources for training, dialogue and exchange orientated to teachers, families and communities. An space for learning about these set of evidence-based educational actions and also share experiences and ideas based on peer learning among schools, families and communities. It is therefore a virtual space for both training and sharing.

"Open doors" will allow a quick response to the challenge of strengthen rich and caring interactions between peers and with their educational communities beyond the boundaries of their homes, because:

- The set of 'Open Doors Actions' have no technical complexity and do not need specific hardware or software. They can be implemented in every child's home with a device (computer, tablet, mobile phone) connected to internet. Furthermore, the set includes a diversity of educational actions, with different characteristics, and each school can choose to implement those that better respond to their specific context or the specific needs of their students (for instance, students with special needs).

- 'Open doors actions' are based on best theories and research evidence and endorsed by the results collected from a group of eight schools that have reported the beneficial impact of these actions on children's cognitive and emotional development during confinement.

- The information and training will be available through a virtual space. It will allow: 1) to be trained in the set of ODAs in a short period of time and be ready to implement them, 2) to engage in the training process at any moment, and permanently increase the number of people trained, 3) to participate after the

training sharing their own experience, allowing continuous training based on peer-to-peer exchange.

- The prototype designed can be easily and quickly turned into a virtual space ready to use. The technical simplicity and the availability of the evidence-based training content enhances the project feasibility, while the dynamism of the training (quick and interactive) enhances its scalability and sustainability. The virtual space will consist of four main sections: experiences shared by schools, webinars with the expert trainers, resources and theoretical background.

Open doors Actions (ODA): Dialogic workspaces with students, teachers and volunteers Dialogic Gatherings (DG) Class assembly or mentoring Dialogic pedagogical gatherings with teachers and community Mixed-Committees and community networks Dynamization of the social networks with preventive messages and creating sense of community

The necessities in order to continue the project

-Develop the prototype in a virtual space -Establish strategic partnerships to disseminate the set of 'Open Doors' actions. -Secure the minimum resources needed for sustainability.

The value of your solution(s) after the crisis

It is still unclear if social distancing and confinement will become increasingly common in our globalized societies. However, it is likely to happen that online education, along with home-office work, are boosted after the current crisis. In this new scenario, "Open doors" would be a useful tool to support children and family life during online working and education at home. Furthermore, it can be a channel for schools to transfer evidence-based educational actions into a face to face education after the crisis.

Try it out

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